

Considerations and Criteria for Recruiting Communities for the Strategic Prevention Framework – State Incentive Grant (SPF SIG)

I. Maximize Successful Implementation

While a prevention intervention that fails to have an impact on its targeted problem can still be a learning experience, failure to implement an intervention is a severe loss of opportunity. While no one can guarantee successful implementation, some key criteria will be helpful.

A. Interest and commitment to the goals and objectives of the California SPF SIG

1. Interest and commitment to targeting the outcome(s) identified by the GPAC/SEW.

The SPF SIG requires the advisory council and SEW to identify the targeted outcome that all communities will be seeking to reduce. Examples of a target include underage drinking, young adult binge drinking, or alcohol-impaired driving.

2. Interest and commitment to the SPF process as guided by PRC/ADP

The SPF identifies five major steps. PRC and ADP will be developing further processes and tools to facilitate successful implementation.

3. Interest and commitment to the California SPF SIG intervention strategies as guided by PRC/ADP

While there are multiple approaches to addressing the selected outcomes, the California SPF-SIG is committed to evidence based, community, environmental and/or policy level interventions (e.g., as opposed to only awareness or educational approaches). The recipient communities should share this basic strategic approach.

B. Infrastructure facilitative of intervention strategies

1. Community is well-defined, with clear and coincident jurisdictions of local agencies

Implementation will be more difficult if the community straddles different jurisdictions for public agencies, as this requires even greater coordination and resources than would otherwise be the case. Ideally, the community would coincide with boundaries for police, schools, urgent care, political boundaries, and media. NOTE: to clarify “coincide” – not just exact match but also “overlap” so that at least all relevant agency jurisdictions contained within a broader one (e.g., community within a city structure served by a single school district, political representation and within a county jurisdiction and a broader media service area)

2. Existing coalition not necessary but may be helpful if it hasn't already determined a different set of targets and interventions that would compete with the SPF SIG outcomes and process

Conventional wisdom suggests that having a coalition in place would facilitate successful implementation of the SPF, and that may be true in many circumstances. There are, however, cases where an existing coalition may prove to be a barrier if it is already committed to a different agenda.

3. Evidence of good collaboration and interest among key county and community agencies

Successful implementation is likely dependent on good coordination across key agencies, including public health and law enforcement agencies, emergency medical centers, schools, and public officials.

4. Evidence of knowledge and commitment to evidence-based, community, environmental and/or policy level interventions at the county level

California SPF-SIG is committed to systematically testing the feasibility and effectiveness of evidence-based, community, environmental and/or policy level interventions.

However, without guidance and shared focus, many communities will default toward more individual based interventions at the expense of broader population and system based approaches.

C. Community population small enough to affect change, but large enough to have key agencies

While there is no clear limit, California's largest cities may require more time to implement the SPF than is available with the current funding period. Its smallest towns may not have sufficient infrastructure to achieve the intervention.

II. "Evaluability" – Maximize Successful Evaluation

A successful implementation is half the challenge. The other half is being able to measure its effects. Without evaluation, no one can be certain that the intervention is worth repeating. The need for key measures brings another set of criteria into play.

A. Availability of process and outcome data, preferably multiple baseline data already exists (e.g., school survey data); Commitment to collect limited process data (e.g., enforcement data) and possible outcome data (e.g., very short school surveys on alcohol use)

The SPF project depends on having specific measures that will confirm that the community was able to implement the intervention (process measures) and whether the intervention then lowered the targeted problem (outcome measures). Ideally, the outcome measures would have been collected over time prior to the SPF project to better detect an intervention effect. Process measures (e.g., whether enforcement of alcohol laws was enhanced) will have to be collected by the community members involved in the project.

B. Population large enough to be able to demonstrate change in a timely and meaningful manner (e.g., have stable measures from year to year on key outcomes)

The communities selected must be large enough to make a population level change that is measurable. Small samples (say, from school surveys) or low numbers of outcomes (e.g., alcohol-involved crashes) present problems for any evaluation, especially when there is a relatively short period of time in which the intervention is in effect. Larger communities usually provide data better suited for evaluation.